JAQUESS, James F.

DRAWER 4A PREACHER INFLUENCES

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Abraham Lincoln and religion

James F. Jaquess

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

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C O P Y

Tunica, Miss.
Jan. 20th, 1897.

My Dear Fannie,

Your welcome letter of the 11th Jan. is thankfully received. I am delighted to hear of good cheer, health, mild weather, etc., etc. The grippe is the fashion in these parts. I have escaped even a symptom of it to date. Therm. 60° - plows running - preparing for seed. Hens have held their spring convention and eggs are abundant and cheap. Nature is lovely. Man only is vile. Two gentlemen, so called, and to the manor born, neighbors, quarreled, both aimed-five shots fired near our house, and in good range of where I stood - result, one killed on the spot - one wounded, will recover (D.V.). Verdict of Coronor's jury, justifiable homicide - Such is life in the sunny South.

The gospel has not finished its good work on earth yet, and Martha is not the only lovely character of scripture times that may have been misunderstood, and that certainly has been misrepresented. I have heard Paul called a crusty old bachelor because he desired women to be ladies as well as Christians. No man in the history of the human race, in Church or State placed a higher estimate upon woman's influence for good or for evil or used that influence, for the good of the world, to such advantage as did St. Paul; and he found a place in the service of the Church, and in general evangelical work, for women in the three relations of life in which he found them, viz. married, widow and single; and equally useful in each sphere as a most worthy example among married women, take Priscilla, wife of Aquila. Apollos, the only man mentioned in the New testament as noted for his learning and eloquence, was her pupil in his early ministry - for he knew but little of real Christianity, except as it was taught by John, the Baptist, till Priscilla became his teacher and showed him the way more perfectly. As an example of the second class, the widow, take Lydia, one of the small congregation of women, to whom Paul preached in the vicinity of Philippi, as he was starting on a Missionary tour which was destined to result in the evangelization of Europe: The Lord opened her heart and she became a convert to the religion of Christ, and became a worker in the Master's cause such as has been the ornament of the Church in all ages. . . For a charming example of female influence of high grade found among Paul's helpers in single life, and the third class mentioned, take Phebe. Though robbed of the honor conferred upon her by a bad translation, she still shines among the constellations that brighten a long the milky way. In the original she has the same official designation as other evangelists, such as Timothy, etc. Robbed by some old fogey

translations that feared women's influence.

Women may sin greatly by giving themselves up, wholy, to fashion and display without becoming corrupt, but they should never forget that they have much more influence for good or evil than the other half of the human race, whose peculiar duties place them in the front ranks in the great battle of life, where they may work or trifle in the gaze of untold multitudes.

It is most pleasant to reflect upon the career of those who have spent their lives in religious endeavor to make the world better for their having lived in it. On the other hand it fills one with regrets to contemplate the career of others whose lives are only a record of neglected opportunities. Two such cases always come up before me while I contemplate the sacred grandure of those who wrought so faithfully with Paul - I refer to Bernice and Drusilla. What women ever had such opportunity to make themselves known and remembered. They were of royal birth and inheritance.

Visitors to the exhumed city of Torpa (I spell it as it is pronounced), are shown a figure, shadow like, of a woman upon a sold wall in apearance dressed much as ladies dress in these days - evidently swinging the right hand holding that side of the skirt up a little, the foot and ankle exposed a little, not immodestly. This shadowy figure is what is left of the queenly beautiful Drusilla, who was present and heard Paul's magnificent address as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, that made Felix tremble and ag is believed made Drusilla speechless for a time. Overtaken and buried by an avalanch of hot ashes from Vesuveus, her impress or shadow alone remains. All else has been consigned to oblivion.

How different with Priscilla, Lydia, Phebe, and other Mothers and Sisters in Israel that have devoted their lives to an imperishable work in the Lord.

That was more than a Sabbath day's journey you made, and entitles you to a free welcome into the itinerant work of the M.E. Church. When the other fellow comes along we will name it to him, and others as well: then you shall cease to be Martha or Phebe and become Priscilla.

You must have sowed several handsful of seed that day, and you may never know till you return bringing your sheaves with you.

It is wonderfull what follows from the small things of life many times. In the room where I am writing is a beautiful little clock useful only for ornament - not for keeping time. Beautiful face, frame of high ornament, hour hand, minute hand, second bell, alarm attachment - splendid spring inside, not visable to us, but we know it is there; only wants starting. Maud said, I drop a little oil into it. She did so - it started immediately and runs with all the alacrity of a good Christian neighbor or friend.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all/sufficient, shall be thy supply,
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

When annoyances arise drop a little oil on the source, but put no fire under, fire and oil dont do well together - very good, but must not be kept too close together. Many little things annoy one. A single flea will keep a nervous person awake half a night, and whoever caught a flea. I have heard of many persons hunting the little pests but I never heard of any one finding or catching a flea that I remember of, so best just let them alone and they will jump themselves to death.

We have a flock of fine turkeys here. I took charge of them, as they left the shell, in my absence they were well attended to, and now they are as fine a community of bride as you can find anywhere; very intelligent, but if one falls ill all the rest think that one, "hath a devil", "and go about to kill him" - how like many other animals known to us - so very human!!!

We are of Pharaoh's lean kine here - two services a month - don't give time even to get acquainted with the fashions; M.E. Church south here never having repented of having thrust into their discipline the heresy, "Slavery is a Divine institution" - hence are without prosperity - and the whole land is lean for their sakes, and apt to remain so for a time; My son, Lillian and family are all well and reasonably prosperous.

Friends at Helena all well lately - Poscyville when heard from, not lately, doing well. Uncle Thomas was in somewhat improved condition.

St. Paul and Minneapolis seem to have had an avalanch of Bank disasters; blessed is the man that has nothing-for then, and only then, shall he lose nothing.

The swallows, and the geese, must soon homeward fly. I go when they go. Till then, to your dear self and all the dear ones, as ever and forever, - in love

James F. Jaquess.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FROM THE NEW YORK CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE (METHODIST) BY REV. EDWARD L. WATSON, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND ABOUT COL. JAMES F. JAQUESS

Transcript made from original and copied by
permission of Miss Fannie M. Jaquess,
3700 Cedar Lake Avenue,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Christian Advocate

November 11, 1909.

THE CONVERSION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By the Rev. Edward L. Watson.

The religion of Abraham Lincoln is so much in debate that I feel called upon to give the following narrative of an event of which little seems to be known--and which is of real importance in understanding the man. He has been called an infidel--an unbeliever of varying degrees of blatancy. That he was a Christian in the real sense of the term is plain from his life. That he was converted during a Methodist revival seems not to be a matter of common report. The personal element of this narrative is necessary to unfold the story. In 1894 I was appointed to the pastorate of the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, Minn., by Bishop Cyrus D. Foss, being transferred from Frederick, Md., a charge in Baltimore Conference. It was in October that we entered the parsonage, which was a double house, the other half being rented by the trustees. Shortly after our occupancy of the church house William B. Jacquess moved into the rented half of the property, and through this fact I became acquainted with Colonel James F. Jacquess, his brother. At this time Colonel Jacquess was an old man of eighty years or more, of commanding presence and wearing a long beard which was as white as snow. His title grew out of the fact of his being the commanding officer of the Seventy-third Illinois Volunteer Infantry, known as the Preacher Regiment. Its name was given through the publication in the Cincinnati Commercial in September, 1862, of the roster of its officers:

Colonel--Rev. James F. Jacquess, D.D., late president of Quincy College.

Lieutenant Colonel--Rev. Benjamin F. Northcott.

Major--Rev. William A. Presson.

Captains--Company B, Rev. W. B. M. Colt; Company C, Rev. P. McNutt; Company F, Rev. George W. Montgomery; Company H, Rev. James I. Davidson; Company I, Rev. Peter Wallace; Company K, Rev. R. H. Laughlin.

Six or seven of the twenty lieutenants were also licensed Methodist preachers. Henry A. Castle, sergeant major, was the author of the article and a son-in-law, if I mistake not, of Colonel Jacquess.

The history of this regiment is, in brief, as follows: It was organized at the instance of Governor Dick Yates, under Colonel Jacquess, in August, 1862, at Camp Butler, in Illinois, and became part of General Buell's army. It fought nobly at Perryville, and in every battle in which the Army of the Cumberland was engaged, from October, 1862, to the rout of Hood's army at Nashville. Its dead were found at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, where Colonel Jacquess wan especial distinction, and in the succession of battles from Chattanooga to the fall of Atlanta. It was frequently complimented by the commanding generals and was unsurpassed in bravery and endurance. It left the state one of the largest, and returned one of the smallest, having lost two-thirds of its men in its three years' service.

Colonel Jacquess was its only colonel and came home disabled by wounds received at Chickamauga, where two horses were shot under him. He refused to the last (1897) to receive a pension, until in his extreme old age, at the urgent request of the Society of the Survivors of the Seventy-third Illinois, he allowed it to be applied for. He pathetically said: "My grandfathers were Revolutionary soldiers and you could get up a row if you mentioned pensions. My father and my uncles were in the War of 1812, and would take none. I had hoped not to receive one--but I am unable now to do anything, and it has been my desire, and not the fault of the government, that I have never received a pension." These words were spoken in 1897--and not long afterward Colonel Jacquess went to his reward.

Toward the end of the war President Lincoln sent Colonel Jacquess as a secret emissary to arrange for peace and the settlement of the slave question, so as to avert further shedding of blood. His adventures inthis role are of thrilling interest. The foregoing is told to show the quality of the man whom it was my privilege to meet in 1896, when he was in extreme old age. The honors conferred upon him by President Lincoln and the confidence reposed in him grew out of events which preceded the war. This was no other than the conversion of Mr. Lincoln under the ministry of the Rev. James F. Jacquess, at Springfield, Ill., in the year 1839. The Rev. James F. Jacquess was stationed at this new town--then of but a few thousand inhabitants--in 1839, when Lincoln met him during a series of revival services conducted in the Methodist Episcopal

Church. Lincoln had but recently come to the town--having removed from New Salem, which was in a decadent state. As a member of the legislature, Lincoln had been a chief agent in establishing the state capital at Springfield, and though in debt and exceedingly poor, he hoped to find friends and practice in the growing town. He was then thirty years of age, and had had few advantages of any sort. It was on a certain night, when the pastor preached from the text, "Ye must be born again," that Lincoln was in attendance and was greatly interested. After the service he came round to the little parsonage, and like another Nicodemus, asked, "How can these things be?" Mr. Jacquess explained as best he could the mystery of the new birth, and at Lincoln's request, he and his wife kneeled and prayed with the future President. It was not long before Mr. Lincoln expressed his sense of pardon and arose with peace in his heart.

The narrative, as told thus far, is as my memory recalled it. Since writing it, the same as told by Colonel Jacquess has recently been discovered by me in Minutes of the Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Reunion Survivors Seventy-third Regiment, Illinois Infantry, Volunteers (page 30), a copy of which is before me. This meeting, the last (probably) that Colonel Jacquess attended, was held Tuesday and Wednesday, September 28, 29, 1897, in the Supreme Court room of the State Capitol Building, Springfield, Ill. To quote Colonel Jacquess: "The mention of Mr. Lincoln's name recalls to my mind an occurrence that perhaps I ought to mention. I notice

that a number of lectures are being delivered recently on Abraham Lincoln. Bishop Fowler has a most splendid lecture on Abraham Lincoln, but they all, when they reach one point, run against a stone wall, and that is in reference to Mr. Lincoln's religious sentiments. I happen to know something on that subject that very few persons know. My wife, who has been dead nearly two years, was the only witness of what I am going to state to you as having occurred. Very soon after my second year's work as a minister in the Illinois Conference, I was sent to Springfield. There were ministers in the Illinois Conference who had been laboring for twenty-five years to get to Springfield, the capital of the state. When the legislature met there were a great many people here, and it was thought to be a matter of great glory among the ministers to be sent to Springfield. But I was not pleased with my assignment. I felt my inability to perform the work. I did not know what to do. I simply talked to the Lord about it, however, and told Him that unless I had help I was going to run away. I heard a voice saying to me, 'Fear not', and I understood it perfectly. Now I am coming to the point I want to make to you. I was standing at the parsonage door one Sunday morning, a beautiful morning in May, when a little boy came up to me and said: 'Mr. Lincoln sent me around to see if you was going to preach today.' Now, I had met Mr. Lincoln, but I never thought any more of Abe Lincoln than I did of any one else. I said to the boy: 'You go back and tell Mr. Lincoln that if he will come to church he will see whether I am going to preach or not.'

The little fellow stood working his fingers and finally said: 'Mr. Lincoln told me he would give me a quarter if I would find out whether you are going to preach.' I did not want to rob the little fellow of his income, so I told him to tell Mr. Lincoln that I was going to preach. I was always ready and willing to accept any assistance that came along, and whenever a preacher, or one who had any pretense in that direction, would come along I would thrust him into my pulpit and make him preach, because I felt that anybody could do better than I could.

"The church was filled that morning. It was a good-sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words: 'Ye must be born again,' and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word 'must.' Mr. Lincoln came into the church after the services had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit, and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the entire services, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right, and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk with me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted

that night in my house. His wife was a Presbyterian, but from remarks he made to me he could not accept Calvinism. He never joined my church, but I will always believe that since that night Abraham Lincoln lived and died a Christian gentleman."

Here ends the narrative of Colonel Jacquess. Now compare that which my memory preserved for the past thirteen years and the Colonel's own printed account, and the discrepancies are small. It is with pleasure I am able to confirm my memory by the words of the original narrator. It is with no small degree of pleasure that I am able to prove that Methodism had a hand in the making of the greatest American. Colonel James F. Jacquess has gone to his reward, but it is his honor to have been used by his Master to help in the spiritualization of the great man who piloted our national destinies in a time of exceeding peril. It is an honor to him, and through him to the denomination of which he was a distinguished member.

(Copied from The New York Christian Advocate, November 11, 1909)

PASTOR TELLS OF LINCOLN CONVERSION

Dr. Charles Edward Locke, at the First Methodist Episcopal Church yesterday preached on the subject "Still the Day of Miracles," saying in part:

JESUS CHRIST himself said to Nicodemus "Ye must be born again!" and there is every reason to believe that this scholarly member of the Jewish Sanhedrim accepted the ideals of the great teacher from Nazareth.

Likewise, these same words fell upon the heart of Abraham Lincoln from the lips of a humble Methodist preacher. Here are the simple and authentic details:

Mr. Lincoln was about thirty years of age and had just taken up his residence in Springfield, Ill., for the purpose of practicing law. It was in the year 1839. The pastor of the Methodist Church was the Rev. James F. Jacques, afterward the colonel of the Seventy-third Illinois volunteer infantry during the Civil War. This responsible preacher-soldier says that one Sunday morning a boy came to his parsonage to inquire whether he was to preach as usual, explaining that Mr. Lincoln had sent him. The minister replied jocosely to the boy to tell Mr. Lincoln to come to church and find out for himself. Whereupon the lad said he had been promised a quarter if he would secure the information. The kind-hearted preacher of course helped the boy to get his money. When Mr. Lincoln arrived at the church he was accompanied by Governor French and wife. The church being crowded the distinguished party were seated inside the chancel.

The preacher's subject was "Ye must be born again!" It was a strong, earnest sermon and Mr. Lincoln listened with absorbing interest. One night shortly afterward, like Nicodemus, he called to see the minister, and said he had been profoundly impressed by the Sunday morning sermon. Mr. Jacques says that Mr. Lincoln remained at his home for hours in conversation, and at length, after much counsel and earnest prayer, Mr. Lincoln accepted God as his Father and Jesus Christ as his Savior. Let me use the preacher's own words: "I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my home."

Judge Simeon W. King, an intimate friend of Mr. Lincoln, says that all stories to the effect that Lincoln was a drinking man, an atheist and a believer in clairvoyance, are absolutely false. He declares that Lincoln was a true Christian, and a total abstainer, read the Bible and prayed daily for strength and deliverance.

[illegible] EIGHTH STREET

JONES-HARRISON HOME
3700 CEDAR LAKE BOULEVARD

MAHALA FISK FILLSBURY HOME
819 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH

WOMANS HOTEL
122 HENNEPIN AVENUE

KIRKBRIDE CLUB
1608-1614 STEVENS AVENUE

W. C. A. CENTRAL CLUB
1800-1804 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH

W. C. A. HALL
1800 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH

W. C. A. BERKELEY CLUB
MARQUETTE AT 13TH STREET

W. C. A. HOSPTAL
1714 STEVENS AVENUE

W. C. A. CLINTON CLUB
1301 FOURTH AVENUE SOUTH

COUNTRY CLUB—JANNETTE MERRILL PARK—HOWARD'S POINT—LAKE MINNETONKA

WOMANS CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF MINNEAPOLIS
ORGANIZED 1866
INCORPORATED 1874

TELEPHONE ATLANTIC 0674

217 MEYERS ARCADE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Mr. Martin:— I copied the enclosed from a newspaper clipping in my father's old scrap-book. It is the nearest information I can find of Mr. Lincoln attending the Methodist Church in Springfield.

I do not know what paper the article was cut out of, or who the writer was.

Fannie J.

Jas. M. Martin Correspondence - (Hanks - Hitchcock Papers)

Died 1898
78 years

THE LATE COLONEL JAQUESS

Colonel James F. Jaquess, who died in Saint Paul a few days ago, had a notable career. He was a student in Indiana Asbury University when a lad, about 1845, and after a turn at the law was opposed as a candidate for for entrance into the Illinois Conference by no less a character than Peter Cartwright, on the ground that the youth had been spoiled for the ministry by having been through college. He was, however, admitted, and in due time was stationed in Springfield. Here he made the acquaintance and won the confidence of Abraham Lincoln. In an address delivered at the reunion of his old regiment a year or two ago Colonel Jaquess related an incident of that period in his history with wonderful effect, telling how Mr. Lincoln, then but a country lawyer, unknown to fame and beset with doubts, used to come to the Methodist Church with his friends to hear the pastor Jaquess. One evening the lawyer and the preacher met on the street and got to talking of the religious life, of the truths of Christianity, and of the life beyond. They went to the parsonage, and here Mr. Jaquess instructed Mr. Lincoln as tho he had been a penitent child seeking for light; they knelt and prayed together, Mr. Lincoln apparently giving his life over to Divine keeping. At least Colonel Jaquess, who knew Lincoln intimately from that time on until the crown of Martyrdom was awarded to him, never ceased to declare his belief that on that occasion, in that quiet hour of prayer, "Abraham Lincoln was converted."

In 1864, or early in 1865, Colonel Jaquess, who had commanded with great valor and enthusiastic devotion the Seventy-third Illinois, became impressed that if he had a chance he could induce the authorities of the SouthernConfederacy to give up and sue for peace. He pleaded with his old friend Mr. Lincoln, until the President gave him permission to pass through the lines, with an open letter authorizing him to say certain things to the officials at Richmond. He made the journey, and came back a disappointed man. He had dreamed of a compromise, but his dream was rudely dispelled when he found that the southern leaders were not ready to agree to anything except the independent existence of their government.

The writer of this article was in Washington on staff duty at the time when Colonel Jaquess came back from his peace expedition, and had the opportunity to hear from the preacher-colonel a stirring sermon on Sunday evening. The mission to Richmond had become known and much curiosity was felt to hear Jaquess. He preached accordingly to a crowded congregation in old Wesley Chapel. We do not recall anything of the service now except the prayer, of which this was a portion: "O Lord," said the Colonel, "bless Jefferson Davis, and the Southern Confederacy! Bless the armies of Lee and Johnston, and the brave sailors who man the Southern privateers!" Here the preacher-soldier paused for breath, while the people held theirs in suspense, not knowing what had come over the man. Perhaps the suspicion came into some minds that the Colonel, by virtue of his southern adventure, had become converted to that side of the case. Their fears were relieved when he went on: "Yea, Lord, bless Jefferson Davis,- bless him with the spirit of awakening and penitence; bring him to his senses; show him his folly and his blindness, and lead him into the right way. Bless the Southern Confederacy-bless it with confusion in its counsels, with failure in its plans,- send ruin into all its borders. Bless the armies of Lee and Johnston,- bless them with defeat on the fiels of battle, with rout and panic and disaster from the Mississippi river to the sea! Bless the officers and the sailors of the Confederate navy,- with capture and discomfiture everywhere. Hasten the end of war, the dawn of peace, the re-establishment of the Union and of orderly government in all the land. Soon may every star that has wandered from its peaceful orbit be brought back to its place in the blue field of our nation's flag. Amen and Amen!"

We believe that no one who listened to that prayer ever forgot it. Dr. Jaquess was one of the founders of the Illinois Female College at Jacksonville, and for several years before the war broke out he was president of our college at Quincy, Illinois, now Chaddock. We trust that some of his acquaintances in Illinois may be able to supplement what we have written with a fuller account of his career.

JARUESS, James F.

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